DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 288 129 CG 020 302

AUTHOR Oratz, Rosalyn; And Others
TITLE Guidance Every Day: A Helping Manual for Teachers of Grades 4-6.
INSTITUTION New York City Board of Education, Brooklyn, N.Y. Div. of Curriculum and Instruction.
REPORT NO ISBN-88315-827-2
PUB DATE 86
NOTE 101p.
AVAILABLE FROM New York City Board of Education, Divison of Curriculum and Instruction, 131 Livingston St., Brooklyn, NY 11201 ($8.00).
PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom Use - Guides (For Teachers) (052)

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS Career Awareness; Decision Making; Emotional Development; Intermediate Grades; Interpersonal Competence; Preadolescents; *School Guidance; Self Concept; *Student Development; *Teacher Guidance; *Teacher Student Relationship; *Teaching Guides

ABSTRACT

This teacher guide illustrates how guidance may be integrated into classroom instruction in grades four through six and highlights ways in which teachers can build a fully integrated guidance process in their classrooms. Section A explains the purpose of the manual as helping teachers to focus on the guidance process as it relates to five guidance strands. Each strand is presented separately: (1) developing positive self-concept; (2) developing effective interpersonal relationships; (3) developing understanding of emotions, feelings, and values; (4) developing decision-making abilities; and (5) developing career awareness. Section B focuses on traits and activities of the interactive teacher while section C concentrates on the interactive setting. Section D discusses student profiles, presents a child development chart, provides forms for getting to know students, and gives four profiles representing observations of children as recorded by their teacher. Section E, Resources, lists possible roles of the guidance counselor as a resource for teachers, provides two sample lesson plans, and contains a selected bibliography. (NB)

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# Guidance Every Day

*A helping manual for teachers of grades 4-6*

New York City Board of Education

Division of Curriculum and Instruction

Office of Student Progress

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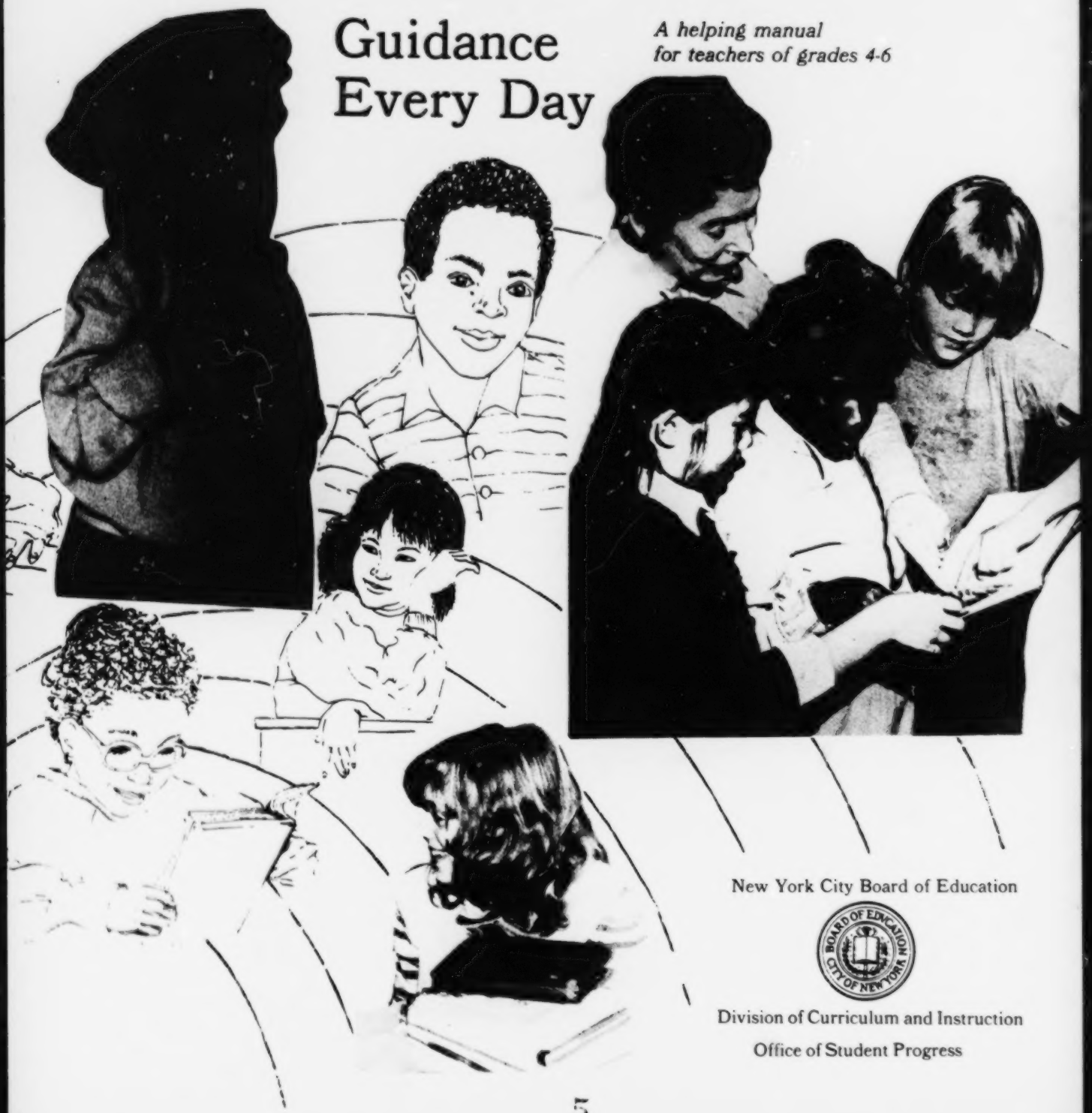

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ISBN No. 88315-827-2 Curric. No. 04-4000-21
Other persons and institutions may obtain copies of this publication from the Curriculum Editorial and Production Unit of the Office of Curriculum Development and Support, Room 613, 131 Livingston Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201. See current catalog for price. For information, call (718) 596-4907.

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## Dedication

This manual is dedicated to teachers, guidance counselors, administrators and all school personnel in recognition of the caring, sensitivity and support provided daily to the students in our school system.

# Foreword

No task is more important or rewarding than guiding the growth and learning of young children. Teachers sharpen their understanding of how best to promote each child's development through observing and interacting with children in their classrooms and by talking with parents and caregivers. A word at the right moment, the assignment of a special task, a chance to share with a partner can help guide children in the process of becoming happy, self-directed learners. Guidance Every Day: A Helping manual for Teachers of Grades 4-6 illustrates how guidance may be integrated into classroom instruction and highlights ways in which teachers can build a fully integrated guidance process in their classrooms.

We hope the ideas offered in this manual will help maximize the pleasures and rewards of teaching young children.

Please send us your reactions. Your comments are vital in planning revisions and further staff development.

Charlotte Frank

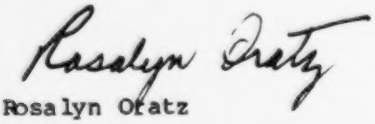
Charlotte Frank
Executive Director
Division of Curriculum
and Instruction

# Introduction

Guidance Every Day: A Helping Manual for Teachers of Grades 4-6 is based on the premise that every teacher can have a lasting positive impact on the children in each class.

Interactions with each other in the classroom setting provide both children and teachers with abundant opportunities for awareness, understanding, growth, and achievement.

Guidance Every Day comes out of the experiences and observations of teachers and guidance counselors, incorporating their best approaches with a clear presentation of guidance principles and values. This manual is intended to support and nurture each teacher toward a practical application of these values in the classroom, and to reinforce the teacher's vital role in the guidance process--so that the teacher can help bring forth the winner in every child.



Rosalyn Oratz
Director
Office of Student Progress

# A Special Note

"We hope ...that this is the beginning of a new era...the era when man understands himself."

Neil Armstrong, July 1969
(After returning from the Moon)

Guidance Everyday: A Helping Manual for Teachers of Grades 4-6 shows teachers how to guide and direct children toward understanding not only what's in books but also what they think, how they feel, and what they value. This understanding empowers children to achieve, succeed, and become fully responsible to themselves and to others.

The process by which teachers can encourage such growth incorporates both psychological and educational principles, and bridges affective as well as cognitive concepts and strategies in the classroom. These approaches are described throughout the book as a cohesive, mutually interdependent process.

This book invites teachers to reflect on what they do every day to humanize and enrich the learning process and the lives of children.

Priscilla Chavez-Reilly

Priscilla Chavez-Reilly
Director
Guidance Services Unit

# Acknowledgments

Guidance Every Day: A Helping Manual for Teachers of Grades 4-6, is a collaborative effort of the New York City Board of Education, developed cooperatively by the Division of Curriculum and Instruction, Charlotte Frank, Executive Director, through the Office of Curriculum Development and Support, Morris Freedman, Director; and the Office of Student Progress, Rosalyn Oratz, Director.

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Susan Maria Grathwohl, Division of Curriculum and Instruction, who also wrote the poems.

Barbara Leventer helped compile the Bibliography and was a contributing writer of the first draft, as was Alaire Mitchell, Assistant Director of Curriculum Research, who also contributed the poem on page 19.

We thank all those who contributed experience, observations and suggestions to the initial phase of this project, including:

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Pauline Dicker, Supervisor of Guidance, District 22
Joyce Goldberg, Guidance Counselor, P.S. 198, District 22
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Haasa G. Potashnick, Teacher, P.S. 174, District 19
Dr. Edward Michael Powers, Coordinator, FACT$ Program
Martin Smith, Assistant Director, Guidance Services Unit
Roger Wilbeck, Guidance Counselor, Non-Public Schools
Cynthia Wilson, Coordinator, Guidance Services Unit

Special thanks to Murray Nobleman of the Office of Media and Telecommunications for photography; and to Kathleen Shay, Principal, and the staff and students of Gil Hodges Elementary School (P.S. 193), especially Marianne Bassi, Teacher, and her 6th Grade class; and Larry Goldstein, Guidance Counselor, for cooperation and hospitality during photography.

The manuscript was prepared for publication by the Editorial and Production Unit, under the direction of Alaire Mitchell, Assistant Director of Curriculum Research and Maureen Maguire, Production Coordinator. Susan Maria Grathwohl was Project Editor. The cover was designed by Diane Lightsey, who also did the line drawings, and prepared the mechanicals.

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***"With invidual differences as our starting point we view guidance as relating to all those things which adults do consciously to assist an individual child to live as fully and effectively as he is able."***

--Association for Supervision
and Curriculum Development,
*Guidance in the Curriculum*

# Beginnings

"A teacher affects eternity. There's no telling where his influence may end."

- Henry Adams

Teachers have always played an important role in the lives of children, but today they have an even greater impact. Today's children are growing up in a rapidly-changing, often confusing society. Changes in family structure and family roles, geographic mobility, and the weakening of other social structures have eroded the support children traditionally relied on in their growing years. The media send them mixed messages and negative role models abound.

In the mid '80s, more than ever, we, as teachers, can be positive significant role models in children's lives. Our attitudes towards each child we teach can affect each child's attitude toward learning. The way we see the children we teach can influence how the children see themselves, and, consequently, how they relate to others. In order to maximize the impact we have on each child, we need to understand the role of guidance in an interactive setting.

When we bring a sense of excitement to learning; when we help children take risks and respond to challenges with confidence, when we help children set high goals and work toward those goals in realistic steps, we are addressing the needs of children. Teachers who recognize that we "do not teach fifth grade, or third grade, mathematics or reading" but that we teach the whole child--understand intuitively the role of guidance. Children have emotional and social as well as intellectual needs. In fulfilling these human needs, we facilitate cognitive growth as well. Using guidance in daily instruction increases success for children and teachers.

When children feel understood and secure, accepted, and valued for who they are, they grow as learners and as caring and confident human beings. An important aspect of this acceptance in a pluralistic society is for children to know that their teacher respects and understands their special needs, as well as their cultural, ethnic, and religious backgrounds.

Teachers who are concerned and pay attention to the whole being of each of their students will be rewarded with:

- reduced discipline problems
- improved attendance
- students who demonstrate greater motivation, more personal involvement, increased self-confidence and higher academic achievement.

A teacher's impact does not end with the school year; each successful school experience builds the foundation for continued success. Teachers who listen to children and truly hear them, who look at children and clearly see them as unique individuals will succeed not only in meeting children's academic needs in the present but will be helping to prevent learning and behavior problems, truancy and drop-outs in the future.

# Section A The Guidance Strands

Guidance should focus on the whole child and all the interactions of the school setting. Guiding children is a holistic process. A touch at the right moment, a word of praise, a look of encouragement, are all part of the guidance process. Teachers are engaged in guiding children every day. The purpose of this manual is to help teachers focus on the guidance process as it relates to five guidance strands.

Strand 1: Developing Positive Self-Concept

Strand 2: Developing Effective Interpersonal Relationships

Strand 3: Developing Understanding of Emotions, Feelings and Values

Strand 4: Developing Decision-Making Abilities

Strand 5: Developing Career Awareness

While each guidance strand is presented separately, in reality these strands are interwoven and overlap. When children feel good about themselves, they can empathize with others and become more effective in their interpersonal relationships. Progress in any one area is reflected in other areas.

For the experienced teacher, many ideas presented in this guide will validate and reinforce successful classroom practices. For new teachers the ideas and examples may help empower them to reach and teach their children.

# Strand 1:

## Developing Positive Self-Concept

Positive self-concept is a critical area of development that affects how one learns and how one behaves. The formation of self-concept begins in infancy and continues to grow and change throughout our lives. As we absorb experiences and other people's reactions to us, we form attitudes and impressions about ourselves. Thus, self-concept--the total picture we have of ourselves--does not grow in isolation. How others relate to us is a critical factor in how we see ourselves. If the significant people in our lives regard us as lovable and capable, we see ourselves that way.

### *Self Awareness*

As children struggle to discover who they are, they formulate various self perceptions. Often children do not articulate these concerns as specific questions; however, they feel acutely any negative responses to perceptions which may be expressed by the following questions:

- How does my family feel about me?
- Does my teacher like me?
- Do my classmates like me?
- Can I learn?
- Am I good looking?
- Is my culture appreciated?
- What do I like to do?
- Is it okay to do the things I like?
- Whom do I like to be with?
- Do they like to be with me?

Each perception affects the vital questions:

- Do I like myself?
- Am I capable?
- Am I a worthwhile individual?

As teachers, we need to provide experiences and interactions that will help children answer these and other self-assessment questions in positive ways:

- Yes, I like myself.
- Yes, I'm capable.
- Yes, I am a worthwhile person.

It is important to remember that one's self-concept can be changed. As teachers interact with children they can help turn negative feelings into positive feelings by:

. respecting the individuality and uniqueness of each child.
. displaying appreciation of the child's culture.
. responding positively to each individual child.
. promoting a classroom climate in which children are guided to respond positively to one another.
. giving praise and recognition for what each child learns.
. providing children with the opportunity to work independently and in groups.
. affording children the opportunity to be part of the decision-making process.

And by continually offering acceptance, encouragement, understanding, and support to each child.

Teachers can and do affect children in a multitude of ways. Research shows that one of the most critical factors in children's ability to learn is the teacher's level of expectation. A teacher who believes that each child is capable of learning and conveys that expectation can powerfully affect children's perceptions of themselves as capable learners.

Teachers help children learn by focusing on the learning process itself. Children need to know that:

- learning is a process that has both smooth and difficult periods.
- all learners experience difficulties at times.
- one may fail a test, but that doesn't make him or her a failure.
- learners have different learning styles.
- everyone participates in the learning process.
- learning is an exciting process.
- learning is a lifelong process.

The teacher's own attitude and behavior toward learning strengthens children's attitudes toward learning. Telling the class a story of how the teacher mastered something difficult, sharing the joy of a new interest, discussing one's own learning style illustrates that the teacher is an active learner.

If children receive positive feedback as learners, they are better able to see themselves as capable and worthwhile people. If they receive ongoing negative feedback they not only see themselves as poor learners, but as less valuable people.

Therefore, it is vital that teachers provide children with positive learning experiences in which they can feel successful.

By providing appropriate experiences and giving honest and timely praise and recognition teachers pave the way for the child's next challenge. Each successful school experience strengthens the child's self-concept, which in turn sets the stage for further success in a circle of positive growth.

## Strand 2:

# Developing Effective Interpersonal Relationships

Interpersonal relationships are based on learned behaviors that begin in infancy. The continuing development of interpersonal skills is highly complex and unique to each individual. As we grow and change, our ability to relate to others in new ways increases. Like our self image, the way we relate to others does not evolve in isolation. The process is interactive and circular. A child smiles and an adult smiles back; thus the child learns that a positive action results in a positive interaction.

Developing the capacity to value and accept others is often a mirror reflection of one's own self image. When we feel we are understood and valued, we become more capable of understanding and appreciating others. The interactive process is in motion.

As children learn new and effective interpersonal skills, their ability to regard themselves both as individuals and as a part of the group is enhanced.

- I'm okay and I can get along with my friends and they like me.

Children internalize what they see, what they're exposed to daily. They often imitate the behavior and actions of the adults around them. Daily classroom interactions provide many opportunities for strengthening a child's interpersonal relationships and skills.

Many strategies can be used effectively by the teacher to help students develop interpersonal relationships. The following list provides a core of skills.

Children need to develop the ability to:

- express their own ideas, opinions, and feelings.
- listen to other people's points of view.
- empathize with others.
- recognize how their own actions may affect others.
- give constructive and helpful rather than destructive criticism.
- accept positive and negative responses from others without overreacting.
- accept and appreciate individual and cultural differences.

This core of positive interpersonal skills can be consciously modelled by the teacher throughout daily experiences, discussions and frequent evaluations in the classroom setting. Besides the family, the teacher's behavior and modeling of interpersonal skills are the strongest influence in helping shape the behavior of children.

***Positive Peer Pressure***

Relationships with adults play a central role in the first six or seven years of the child's life. Thus the role of the classroom teacher in the primary grades is critical.

By middle childhood a shift occurs in children's relationships with adults. Children look more toward each other for advice, direction and acceptance. In today's complex urban society where values are changing, children have many more choices and options, and can become confused as they move from primary relationships with their families and as they continue to develop who they are. As their relationships with peers become more important to them, it's especially important that the teacher actively provide guidance by being sensitive to changes, and by observing and structuring activities to help children improve their interpersonal skills.

In a supportive learning environment, the interactive teacher creates opportunities for good interpersonal experiences. She enlists the help of the children to foster positive interpersonal relationships within the classroom in order to encourage children to:

- share and discuss openly.
- value each other's opinions and skills.
- recognize strengths, and help each other strengthen weaknesses.
- respect each other's individuality and uniqueness.

### *Standards for Social Interaction*

Children learn by example: they watch the teacher closely. The children observe interactions between their teacher and others--in the hallway, in the lunchroom, in the office. How the teacher interacts and communicates with others sets an example and conveys a message to children. An aware teacher can foster a learning environment that allows children to understand a variety of interactions between teacher and student and student/student. In the classroom setting, the teacher sets the positive tone and establishes expectations for acceptable social behavior in the following ways:

- elicits from children their expectations--what they need and how they would like to be treated.
- praises and recognizes positive attitudes and good behavior in children.
- models respect for children.
- allows for discussion about how each child relates to and affects the other children.

### *Developing Sensitivity to the Feelings of Others*

The teacher's role in helping children develop sensitivity to how other people feel is an important component of interpersonal relationships. This sensitivity may lead some students to experience empathy--the ability to identify with the feelings, emotions and experiences of others. Sensitivity and empathy are facilitated by active listening. In order to help students understand other children's points of view and to empathize with their peers, the teacher must model active listening. That means, listening to <u>what</u> is being said, and what it <u>really</u> means. Often what is really going on is not obvious and needs careful observation and active listening.

The teacher can continually communicate this understanding to children and encourage them to listen to each other. Careful listening will enhance understanding and appreciation between the teacher and the students and among students, thus encouraging empathy.

When children learn to be more sensitive to each other, the tone of the classroom changes and typical classroom problems are minimized. When conflicts arise, children can resolve them more easily. For example two children want to use the same pair of scissors. Sensitivity to each other's needs makes taking turns with the scissors an easy solution to what might have previously been a conflict.

As children learn to ask themselves questions such as, "How would I feel if...?"; "What would the other person do if..."; and, most importantly, "How would the other person feel if...?" they better understand what their peers are experiencing, and are more likely to develop empathy as well.

***Effective Interpersonal Skills Enhance Self-Esteem***

Teachers skilled in grouping students effectively can help them improve the ways they communicate and work together. The teacher can plan for children to work together to develop and strengthen their individual social skills. Putting a shy and an outgoing student together, or children with different talents that complement each other can bring out the maximum in each child, develop self-esteem and lead to positive experiences. In turn, improving social skills enhances each child's self-esteem. In an interactive class setting where the teacher focuses on appropriate grouping based on individual and group needs, the possibilities are unlimited. Imagine such a classroom if the teacher decided to:

- encourage students to be leaders who can help and support their peers.
- have students lead rap groups to talk about what matters to them.
- team students with different abilities and personalities to work together on projects they like.
- change groups often so that students can get to know each other better.
- let children choose buddies to help and look out for each other.

. have students share individual and group work, compositions and projects.
. have students support each other with positive feedback.
. allow time for students to give and receive personal attention from their classmates.

When children recognize that they can have choices and responsibilities in creating a positive climate, they can work cooperatively toward reaching it. With the teacher's guidance, children themselves can formalize standards of behavior they consider acceptable. Their guidelines will no doubt include the following, as well as statements of other needs unique to each group:

- respecting one another's feelings and opinions
- actively listening when others speak
- greeting each other pleasantly
- using good manners
- trying to find ways to cooperate and share
- recognizing each other's accomplishments
- accepting differences
- being fair
- _____
- _____

***The Teacher's Role in Developing Interpersonal Skills***

In classrooms where teachers focus on making children feel good about themselves, there are many "little" things these teachers do on a daily basis. The following questions may help teachers evaluate their own roles in this process:

- Do I model effective interpersonal skills in my own classroom and in my relationships with colleagues?

- Do I provide opportunities for students to interact with one another in one-to-one, small group and large group situations?

- Have I established clear standards for interactions?

- Do I encourage student participation in decision making?

- Do I help students analyze and discuss interpersonal skills in situations that occur both in and out of school?

- Do I encourage and recognize children who demonstrate that they are improving their interpersonal skills?

- Am I helping children learn how to listen to each other, to set guidelines, and to work through problems with one another?

- Do I encourage formal and informal cooperation and sharing among children?

- Do I provide opportunities for group decision-making so that students learn to value individual contributions?

- Do I recognize that individual needs are sometimes subordinate to those of the group?

- Do I provide opportunities for children to assume different roles within the group so they can develop leadership skills?

- Do I give constructive comments and accept feedback about my own work?

- Do I listen for feedback on how the children perceive me?

- Do I focus on improving the situation rather than questioning an individual's ability or worth?

- Do I provide children with feedback that helps them improve their skills and behavior?

- Do I encourage children to offer constructive criticism to one another and to discuss their own reactions to criticism?

- When conflicts surface in the classroom, do I guide children to resolve the conflict, by allowing them to find an appropiate solution?

- In resolving a conflict, do I help the children analyze what (rather than "who") caused the problem and help place the focus on what can be done by brainstorming solutions?

This checklist can help you become more aware of ways in which you can have a positive influence on students. Notice how subtle some of these questions are. Developing that degree of sensitivity to onself and to the needs of others is a lifetime process.

*Let's look at this day*
*for it is life*
*the very life of life*
*in its brief course lie all*
*the realities and truths of existence*
*the joy of growth*
*the splendor of action*
*the glory of power*

*for yesterday is but a memory*
*and tomorrow is only a vision*
*but today well lived*
*makes every yesterday a memory*
*of happiness*
*and every tomorrow a vision of hope—*
*look well, therefore, to this day!*

*(Ancient Sanskrit Poem)*

*Sometimes my feelings are too big*
*Locked inside my anger turns the air red*
*Sadness wraps me all over*
*So I can't hear or see,*
*And nothing you do touches me.*

*Feelings are scary.*
*Sometimes I'm afraid of my feelings*
*They hurt.*

*But when I know you'll listen*
*I don't feel alone.*
*When you understand,*
*I don't feel afraid.*

*And something else about feelings,*
*When I tell you how I feel and you hear me,*
*It doesn't hurt so much.*

## Strand 3:

# Developing Understanding of Emotions, Feelings and Values

To understand who we are, to accept ourselves and to relate positively to others, we need to understand our own emotions, feelings and values. Feelings and emotions affect everything we do. To reach our potential as human beings, we need to continually identify what we are feeling and find acceptable ways to express those feelings.

Many factors contribute to a caring, supportive learning environment where the expression of feelings is accepted and encouraged. But the most important factor is the teacher. Regardless of the setting, the teacher can create an accepting environment by being a perceptive and sensitive observer of each child's emotions and behavior.

***Observing Emotions and Behavior***

It is possible for teachers to be aware of the level of children's feelings throughout the day. Through ongoing observation in the classroom, lunchroom, gym, and hallways, by watching children's body language, by listening as children interact, teachers can identify those children who need special attention or support. For example: Edgar is scowling, turned away from his work group, banging a pencil on the back of another student's chair. Candace is giggling and talking to her neighbor. Jose looks as if he is about to cry. He puts his head on the desk. Alicia never talks in a group. These are the kinds of behavior that may require the teacher to intervene.

The teacher might suggest to Edgar that they "talk about it." Candace might need to express her exuberance through sharing with others. The particular strategy selected will depend on the teacher's knowledge of the child and how he or she responds. With that in mind, how would you respond to Jose? To Alicia?

Acted-out emotions are easier to recognize and deal with than unexpressed feelings. Another clue is any sudden change in behavior. The "A" student suddenly fails. The extroverted child is suddenly silent. These observations are also signals for intervention on the part of the caring teacher. The teacher can assist children by acknowledging the feelings and communicating acceptance to the child.

The interactive teacher understands that the expression of feelings must take place in the classroom for learning to proceed. As the teacher observes, accepts and understands the expression of feelings, the teacher also has the opportunity to get to know children better and develop a strong relationship with the children. This interactive attitude encourages children to be comfortable with their own feelings and trust the teacher.

By applying individualized guidance strategies, the interactive teacher can help each child learn to cope with feelings.

Children need to understand that:

- expressing feelings helps us cope with them.
- suppressing feelings does not lead to growth.
- verbal expression of negative feelings should be substituted for acting out.
- several different feelings or emotions can be felt about a person or a situation.
- feelings are constantly changing.
- everyone needs an empathetic listener.

***The Teacher as a Model*** One way interactive teachers create vital learning environments is the way they model behavior for their students. Children watch teachers very closely, and are especially sensitive to consistency in behavior. They listen to the teacher's tone of voice in conversations with colleagues, and they pick up on how the teacher treats visitors and parents.

The way teachers handle their own feelings demonstrates this process for the students. Teachers express feelings openly and honestly. They are able to say "I am angry," as well as "I am so proud of you." They are also able to say, "I'm sorry I didn't understand what you meant."

Teachers who express their own feelings are showing that:

- they have the same feelings and emotions as their students: they can be happy, silly, sad, frustrated, and sometimes angry.
- it is okay to be wrong sometimes and to apologize.
- there are acceptable ways to express different emotions and feelings.
- language and behavior can communicate feelings and emotion.
- even the teacher can have a bad day--and make the best of it!

And the way the teachers handle their own feelings demonstrates this process for the students.

***Vocabulary of Feelings*** Teachers who are comfortable in talking about feelings--their own and those of the children--help students develop and expand a vocabulary of feelings. With the proper connection between feelings and descriptive language, children are able to express their feelings in constructive ways. It's okay to have a strong feeling and express it, but it's not okay to express it in a way that hurts someone's feelings. Children learn to say, "I feel frustrated;" "You're blaming me and it's really not my fault;" "I'm so excited, I can't sit still;" "You sound like you're angry with me, are you?" "I'm sorry I hurt your feelings."

The teacher facilitates this process by asking questions: "How does this make you feel?" "What was the other person feeling?" "Are you feeling frustrated?" "Are you excited?" "You look upset, what happened?"

### *Children Helping Other Children Express Feelings*

In addition to the teacher working with all children, children themselves can help each other. Because children look to other children, the teacher can help them to help each other--but this only can take place naturally when there is already a caring atmostphere in the classroom. The teacher cannot talk with every child who needs to share his or her feelings during the day. But it is possible to provide time for sharing in small groups or with partners to listen to each other and to discuss their feelings. The students themselves, with the teacher's support and guidance, can lead these discussions.

*How kids feel about kids is*
*when we are happy*
*we make up jokes*
*race across the playground*
*and when I forgot my lunch you gave me half yours but*
*how I really know we are friends is when*
*I feel like no one else understands me*
*but you always do—*
*and you always want to.*

In a carefully structured classroom, times are provided for children to interact freely with each other, to walk around the room, to help a friend. Imagine how comfortable children could feel in a classroom where the communication of emotions is encouraged, where they can share happy and joyous moments with classmates, and help each other with feelings of anger, hostility, fear, helplessness, and loneliness. In such a classroom, they learn that being an active listener is being a friend.

### *Concepts Related to Feelings*

By communicating with children about feelings, the teacher can help children understand their own feelings. As they become more conscious of their own feelings, they can gain insight into the feelings of others. This insight makes possible an understanding of the experiences of others in literature and other academic areas.

### *Expressing Feelings Through Instructional Activities*

Sensitive teachers create learning environments in which it is safe to express feelings. They promote the expression and exploration of feelings by providing many opportunities for children to discover new things about themselves and each other. Teachers can create abundant opportunities for exploring and sharing feelings through the use of:

- art media
- puppetry
- storytelling
- improvisation or roleplaying
- journal writing, and other creative writing
- open ended stories or discussion
- literature

Through these media, children encounter imaginative experiences which help them clarify feelings, emotions, and values. Such concepts can be developed and understood by children through teacher-led discussion and intervention.

Sharing feelings with classmates enhances the understanding of others both in the classroom and in other cognitive areas such as literature, social studies and current events.

### *Expressing Emotions Differently*

New York City is a microcosm of the world. Its diversity makes teaching both exciting and challenging. Teachers have the responsibility to become familar with the cultures of all the children they teach.

People all around the world experience the same emotions, although the manner in which they express them may vary. Some children will not be comfortable in expressing feelings. Some groups value reticence and emotional restraint, and others express feelings more openly. Thus, children from one culture may express emotions and affection freely, while children from another culture may be embarrassed by demonstrations of feelings. Teachers should understand and accept that children express feelings based partly on culture, and to understand how different cultures view their experience and express their feelings.

When teachers display understanding and acceptance of the uniqueness of each student's culture, the children will readily follow that example.

### *Understanding Values*

Values are those beliefs, principles and assumptions shared by an individual or a group at a conscious or unconscious level. Our values are often assimilated from our family, friends, and important role models, as well as from the larger society and culture.

Both the teacher and the child are constantly growing in the ways they understand and appreciate values. When we teach children to examine the values that motivate their actions or decisions, we are helping them to become aware of what ideas they are choosing to live by. As they become more aware of these values on a conscious level, they will be able to make more responsible choices.

There are three aspects of the valuing process, which may be summarized as follows:

- Awareness of one's beliefs and behavior.
- Consciously and freely choosing beliefs and behaviors, after considering alternatives and consequences.
- Acting according to these beliefs consistently.

This process helps children consciously make decisions and take responsibility for these decisions.

Having a job such as a hall monitor offers opportunities for acting on values. Should Wanda, as hall monitor, speak to her friend about running in the hall, or does Wanda think it is okay for her friends to break certain rules?

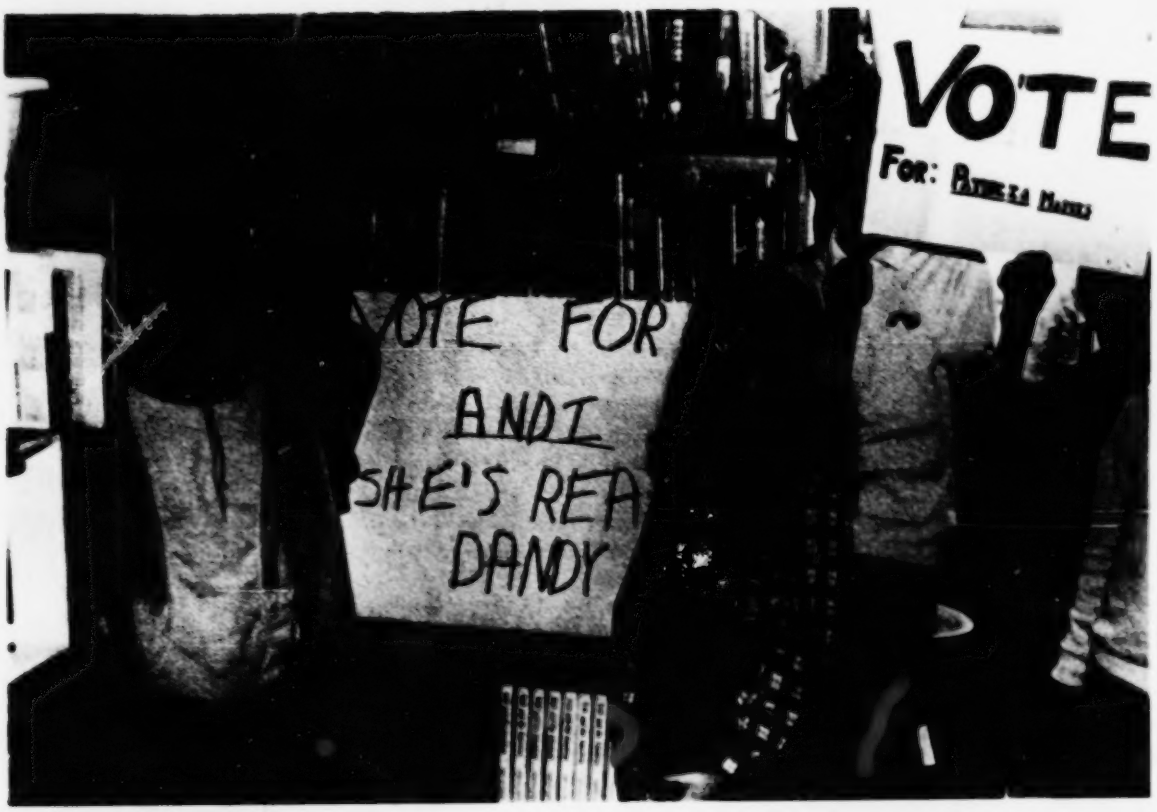
The following values are the basis for supporting the interactive learning environment:

- respect for individual rights
- concern for the feelings and dignity of each individual
- fairness
- cooperation
- individual and group responsibility
- concern for the consequences of one's actions for oneself, for other people, and for society.
- opportunities for personal growth (self actualization)

When a teacher asks a student to consider the consequences of an action in terms of its effect on that student and the other students, the teacher is helping the students explore values. When one child feels free enough to tell another that a certain action is unfair and why it is unfair, values are operating. When a question such as, "What should I do in this situation?" is asked, a beginning is being made in the lifelong process known as valuing.

Robert knows that some of his friends are hanging around with older kids who take drugs. His friends want him to join them after school and they are beginning to make fun of him for always having an excuse not to go. Robert feels very uncomfortable, because he really likes Eddie, and they have been friends since first grade. What should Robert do? How he perceives his choices will reflect the values he has internalized. Here the teacher's role is to provide on-going support for each child's valuing process. The teacher raises the valuing questions so that the alternatives and consequences are considered as they arise rather than only in a crisis situation.

Helping children focus on the values inherent in decisions and choices is one of the most important ways a teacher can support children in learning to think for themselves. In a pluralistic society of complex and even conflicting values, teachers can play a crucial role in helping students understand their values, explore options and consequences, and be able to make educated choices throughout their lives.




## Strand 4:

## Developing Decision-Making Abilities

Who we are and what we become is shaped by the decisions each of us makes throughout our lifetime, beginning in early childhood. Sometimes we can evaluate the consequences of a decision and say, "I made the right decision." Sometimes we say, "I didn't expect that to happen. I wonder what would have happened if.....?" Sometimes we make the next decision intuitively.

The teacher's role is to:

- let go of the need to control "everything" that happens in the classroom.
- allow children to set their own course even if that course is not preferred by the teacher.
- recognize and respect the potential of each child to fully participate, regardless of academic performance.
- trust that each child has many abilities which may develop over time at different rates.
- encourage all to participate fully to the best of their ability.
- allow for the thinking process to take place by not "having all the answers" for children.
- let children explore and discover.
- allow children to take risks, make mistakes, and deal with consequences.
- help children see that mistakes can be opportunities for learning.

***The Decision-Making Process***

Children make decisions daily, even though they may not be aware of how they make these decisions. Deciding how to spend lunch money, what to do after school, what club to join, who to sit with at lunch or walk home with all involve the decision-making process.

Through discussion and questions children can discover that each time they make a decision, they go through the same process. The chart that follows presents a summary of the decision-making process, together with an example of how to apply the principles to an actual situation.

1. Identify and define the problem or decision.
   (Jose has $2 for lunch.)

2. Think about possible choices or alternatives; brainstorm ideas with other people.
   (pizza and coke, hamburger and fries but no soda, two hotdogs and water, balanced meal in cafeteria and 75¢ left for future spending)

3. Consider the consequences and risks and the values involved in each choice.
   (Jose would like to save some money to buy a new transformer.)

4. Discuss the decision with friends, parents, trusted adults.
   (Jose finds out what's on the menu in the lunchroom and what his friends are doing.)

5. Make a choice and a plan for implementing that choice.
   (Jose decides to have lunch in the cafeteria with his friends and save the 75¢.)

6. Act on that choice.
   (Jose has lunch and then saves 75¢.)

7. Evaluate your decision based on the consequences of your action.
   (Jose enjoyed lunch with his friends, and feels good about being able to save money.)

8. Consider whether you learned anything that you would apply to future decisions.
   (Jose decides to find out what's for lunch in the cafeteria more often.)

Another important aspect which should be stressed in discussion is the need for a plan. Even a simple decision usually needs a plan. Deciding what to do after school requires a plan. Nicole wants to go to ballet class and computer club after school. She also wants to be with her friends. By being aware and applying this eight-step process, Nicole improves her ability to make a decision she can feel happy about, rather than just going "eeny-meeney-miney mo," or letting someone else make up her mind.

In applying this process, children will learn to solve some problems on their own. They will also learn about exchanging ideas to solve problems together. Working independently and in partnership with others strengthens the identity of each child and provides each child with a sense of belonging to the group through decision-making and problem solving.

A class is trying to decide on a science project or an art project. The group is evenly divided. No one wants to compromise. The teacher suggests they think of a project that can combine art and science. The children brainstorm possible combinations.

In brainstorming:

- teacher emphasizes that all ideas and questions are welcome.
- teacher encourages children to say the first thing that comes to mind without censuring them.
- children suggest as many questions or ideas as possible.
- all ideas are considered--one idea in isolation may seem far-out, but when combined with other ideas can turn out to be a good way to solve a problem.
- contributions are presented as questions to help establish a non-threatening atmosphere for problem solving. "What would happen if...." is a question form which can be applied to any subject area study as well as to other class decisions.

### *Group Decision Making*

Group decision-making motivates greater involvement of students in classroom activities, and helps each child internalize the skills and concepts of a democratic society. When they participate in a democratic process, children can learn:

- the value of individual contributions to a group.
- that sometimes one has to subordinate individual needs to those of the group.
- each group needs organizational rules.

The group process also offers children opportunities to:

. understand and express their own feelings, and values.
. assess alternatives, at each step of the decision-making process.
. function in different roles within a group.
. develop leadership skills.

When students are aware of the dynamics and actually participate in decision-making, they also learn that:

. different people may be leaders at different times.
. accepting each idea encourages everyone to contribute and this makes possible a flow of ideas.
. decision-making offers viable options.
. decision-making is a learning process.
. considering alternatives can be creative and challenging.

### *Decision Making and Critical Thinking*

The process of making personal decisions and choices can carry over into all subject areas and all other areas of learning. The integrated approach, whether in making a personal decision, evaluating a scientific experiment, solving a mathematic riddle, or predicting consequences of an historical decision, should encompass the same eight-step process. The teacher's role is to make these connections.

By helping children become aware of, learn, and internalize the decision-making process, the teacher provides them with a strong basis for developing the critical thinking and problem-solving abilities which affect all aspects of their future lives.

Parents and other adults make most decisions for young children, but, as children grow, the role of the adult lessens and children begin to make more decisions independently. These decisions relate to home, friends, the neighborhood, the school setting, academic learning, moral and ethical values. The ability to make apporpriate decisions, act on those decisions, and evaluate the results contributes to the child's positive self-image as a capable, competent human being. Independent decision-making is necessary for social, emotional and intellectual growth.

Even very young children have the capacity to make decisions. The teacher empowers children to make decisions by helping them understand that decision-making is a crucial part of life, both in and out of school. Some decisions are minor and some are major. The process necessary for developing decision-making skills can be nurtured by:

- personal and social situations.
- establishing a classroom environment in which students learn how to make and implement appropriate decisions.
- focusing on alternatives and problem solving.
- teaching decision-making as a discrete skill and infusing it into all areas.

***Class Participation in Decision-Making***

In the democratic classroom, the teacher allows and encourages children to make decisions related to:

- social situations.
- work priorities.
- planning and implementing activities.
- scheduling activities.
- developing guidelines or rules for many tasks and situations.

*When I grow up,*
*I'm going to do something special—*
*I'll discover a new world in a telescope*
*or maybe invent one in plastic*
*or explore*
*a world of music or of microscope*
*I never knew before!*
*Because today I'm learning*
*that everything I can dream of doing*
*is something special*
*to learn how to do!*

## Strand 5:

# Developing Career Awareness

Simone and Jorge go into the play area. Simone takes the stethescope and Jorge puts on an astronaut's helmet. As first graders, their play reflects fantasy, but by the time they are in the sixth grade their "let's pretend" play will include some elements of reality-testing. By sixth grade Simone may be interested in science or medicine, and Jorge may be interested in space travel. Career exploration begins early in life, part of an ongoing continuum.

Nevertheless, some teachers may wonder if fourth graders are ready for career discussion. "How can I introduce career awareness?" Teachers may also be concerned about children who have very little exposure to the world of work--"Where do I begin?"

As children begin to experience independence from adults, they begin to develop awareness that someday they will be adults "on their own," and can begin to think about what they want to be when they grow up. All children should be supported in their right to have a dream, to acquire information, to make choices and prepare for making that dream a reality.

An ongoing program of career education can bridge the gap between fantasy and reality--dreams <u>can</u> become reality.

The premises of career education have been summarized as follows*:

> "Career education programs provide students with knowledges and skills necessary to becoming self-fulfilled and productive members of society.
>
> "The eight elements of career education are:
>
> - self-awareness
> - educational awareness
> - attitudes and appreciations
> - economic awareness
> - decision-making skills
> - career awareness
> - beginning competencies
> - employability skills
>
> "A career education program should bridge the gap between what is taught in the classroom and what is going on in the real world. The main strategy for implementing career education in the classroom is INFUSION. Infusion is the incorporation of the eight career education elements into the regular school curriculum."

Like all career education elements, career awareness is not static. Dynamic by nature, it reflects changes in the marketplace and throughout the world of work. The teacher plays a vital role by being knowledgeable about those changes in the world and in the workplace which may affect career options for children.

Just as many jobs that exist today did not exist a decade ago, so too jobs of today may be replaced by jobs that do not yet exist. In today's society both

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men and women will work most of their lives. Not only will they make job changes within a career, but, because of innovations in technology and new self-definitions, they may change careers more than once. The teacher's awareness and creativity in communicating this awareness to children can stimulate their interests and options in a way that can make an important difference in their lives.

The role of the teacher is to open the doors to the world of work, to introduce children to appropriate role models. The teacher shows children as many possibilities as possible. Every child has dreams. The teacher's role is to support and nurture those dreams. By encouraging children, the teacher who believes in the potential of each individual can make a difference.

***Career Awareness Concepts***

Children have to see the connection between what they are learning and what it means to them personally. The following concepts help them make that connection:

- We all have skills and abilities in many areas.
- We can use these skills and abilities to make a difference in the community.
- We need training and education to further develop these skills and abilities.
- The more we develop these skills, the better able we are to get jobs.
- Assuming responsibility for jobs at home and in school prepares us for jobs in the adult world.
- Committee and group work helps us to experience working and living together.
- Each person can use abilities and strengths to make a contribution.
- People around the world have many different ways of making a living.
- Positive attitudes, good work habits and knowing how to learn are transferable skills.
- Nontraditional careers provide new opportunities.
- Work is important for economic gain and personal fulfillment.

Every child has a dream. The teacher helps nurture the dream by showing those steps by which dreams are achieved.

# Section B The Interactive Teacher

**NOTE**

For the sake of clarity and readability, when the teacher is mentioned, the pronoun, "she," has been used. This usage is not intended to imply sexual discrimination, but rather to facilitate a more informal tone. It is understood that men and women alike play a vital role in teaching children, and that the interactive teacher described in Section B is just as likely to be a man.

*I love*
*being human with you.*
*I'm different every minute,*
*free as a child,*
*wise as a sage,*
*thinking on my feet,*
*with my heart and my head*
*in just the right places*
*and the smile on my face is*
*saying how happy I am to be*
*giving you*
*the gift of me!*

Each interaction is special, a gift of self shared with another. The dictionary defines interactive as "having a mutual or reciprocal influence."

Every relationship is interactive. Each relationship is composed of many interactions over time, which together form the quality of a common bond--whether a friendship, an acquaintanceship, a partnership, a marriage.

Within the classroom the teacher is an interactive partner in many relationships--at least one with each child, and with the class as a whole. But one relationship determines the quality of all the rest: the relationship the teacher has with himself or herself.

With all the professional demands upon her time, a teacher might underestimate the importance of her relationship with her inner self--how she feels about herself as a person and as a teacher. But in fact her ability to validate herself and to affirm her own positive qualities is the most important gift she can give herself. The nurturing she gives herself strongly influences the quality of the nurturing and support she can give others. Teaching is a special kind of giving and receiving.

The role of the teacher as a model cannot be overestimated. Children look to the teacher for acceptance, for assistance, for assurance. How she relates to adults as well as children reflects who she is and how she feels about herself. From developing self-concept through promoting decision making and career awareness, who the teacher is and how she feels about herself makes all the difference.

Does the individual teacher really make such a difference? What can we really expect of a teacher with a room full of children with many needs?

"What? More expectations?" might well be the response of a teacher already concerned with meeting so many demands and needs--and some conflicting ones at that.

One expectation encompasses the teacher's major role: to interact positively with children. To describe the teacher's role as "interacting" is to place the emphasis on <u>who</u> the teacher <u>is</u>, rather than what the teacher does. The teacher uses specific strategies on "what to do." But the "choice" of strategy and how well that strategy actually works in the classroom depends on the creativity and the personality the teacher brings to the classroom.

This guidance manual supports the premise that every teacher has the creative skills to develop a learning environment in which maximum learning and socialization can take place:

- The teacher can develop a relationship of caring and trust with each child.
- The teacher can facilitate group processes so that each child feels a sense of belonging.
- The teacher can encourage the development of nurturing and supportive relationships among children.

The teacher does create an interactive learning environment by interacting--by participating in an aware and caring way. The interactive teacher can make a difference by:

- bringing her world into the classroom.
- observing.
- listening.
- facilitating interactions with and among children.
- sharing her sense of humor.
- appreciating children's interests and using children's experiences as a springboard for learning.
- exploring feelings and expectations with children, and being sensitive to the fact that behavior is often an expression of an emotion.
- being positive in discipline procedures--direct in providing feedback and guiding children toward appropriate behavior.
- providing all children with opportunities to participate in the learning process, regardless of their developmental level.
- creating networks with colleagues, parents and community members, and supporting children in creating their own networks.
- being honest with him/herself about his/her own feelings and expectations, and working on self-awareness and professional growth.

*She took a trip*
*to Florida*
*and brought us back*
*a shell*
*that you could hear the ocean in*
*and postcards*
*of the sea:*
*she showed us pictures of her family*
*and told her favorite story:*
*she was kind to everyone*
*and she believed in me.*

***Brings Her World Into the Classroom***

Remember your favorite teacher? The one you wanted to be like? How did you react when she showed her vacation pictures to the class? She knew about people and places far away from the classroom, and she shared her personal experiences with each of you.

Your teachers probably influenced you in many ways--personal style, handwriting, tastes in literature, music, perhaps even in your decision to become a teacher.

Children in grades 4-6 are very aware of the teacher as a person. Many of them are anxious to know about the teacher--her interests, her hobbies, her family. They listen to her conversations with her peers. The teacher should capitalize on this interest and let the children get to know her as a person. When children know and trust their teacher, they will be able to relate more freely and be more open. Similarly, as the teacher displays her understanding and respect for her students, they will feel accepted and comfortable.

When the teacher shares her hobbies or interests with the children, the children learn that:

- sharing is fun.
- we are all different and alike.
- it's okay to be different.
- it's okay to be me!

The teacher is also conveying to her students what the world outside the classroom can be like when she brings in pictures from her trip, shows souvenirs or talks about her hobbies. Through their teacher's experience, they learn that that world beyond is fascinating, and filled with possibilities.

As she shares herself and her world, the teacher demonstrates that the classoom is connected with the larger world in many ways. Using her own interests and experiences as springboards into academic areas, the teacher shows children the connections between the classroom and the larger world. The teacher stimulates feelings of curiosity and intellectual excitement, bringing life and joy to learning.

***Observing Children*** One of the teacher's most valuable resources is her own observations of children as individuals one-on-one, in small group interactions, in large groups or as part of the class. How well the teacher will be able to meet each child's needs will depend on how well she observes and uses this information.

Observing children at work and at play enables the teacher:

- to be aware of changes in children's needs and behavior.
- to tailor activities to meet their educational and guidance needs.
- to be aware of what excites them so she can plan appropriate activities.
- to be aware of developmental stages (such as when children are able to comprehend concepts in addition to facts).

The teacher's "sympathetic understanding" can influence her interaction with the children and thus affect each child's cognitive and social progress. But isolated observations can distort reality. To maximize observations and to avoid misconceptions, the teacher will find it helpful to keep a dated anecdotal on her students, when and if appropriate. A continuum of observations is more meaningful than a single observation.

For many teachers the process of observing is second nature or intuitive. But the more conscious of this process the teacher becomes the more effective she will be as a teacher. Rather than intuitively reacting to each situation, the teacher should develop an overall plan for children with special needs, and address their specific needs, as well as the rest of children.

*Listen to the rain—*
*how it brushes*
*against the pane; listen*
*to the paintbrush*
*touching color to paper;*
*listen to the children*
*singing in the room; listen*
*to the room*
*echoing.*

***Listening to Children***

An interactive teacher is an <u>active</u> listener. As the teacher, am I:

- giving children ample time for verbal expression?
- encouraging children to listen to each other so they can support each other?
- using nonverbal responses (a smile, a nod) to show I am listening and that I care?
- listening for the subtle nuance or hidden message that might signal a need for special attention or intervention?

By listening consistently every day, the interactive teacher learns:

- to perceive the needs of each child.
- to notice how each child's contribution helps shape the dynamic of the group.
- to suspend judgment and labelling.
- to show acceptence and understanding.
- to utilize children's reactions as feedback about the effectiveness of the learning environment.

Children are learning to be learners: they watch how the teacher does things. If the teacher models active listening, children will mirror the same behavior. How the teacher listens is essential for them to imitate, since listening opens new possibilities for learning.

The more comfortable children are with listening, the more receptive they will be for learning. Maybe a sign should be posted:

**Am I Listening?**
**If Not, Let Me Know!**

or

**You are entering the SHARING ZONE!**
**LISTENING IN PROGRESS!**

***Facilitating Interactions***

To facilitate means "to make easier." As a facilitator the teacher assumes the responsibility for keeping the classroom atmosphere open, warm and receptive to learning. The interactive teacher acts as a facilitator by:

- modeling the appropriate use of language.
- encouraging children to express themselves.
- asking thought-provoking questions.
- supporting ideas;
- helping children clarify their thinking.
- helping them extend their thinking into new areas.
- showing them how to expand concepts.
- giving positive reinforcement.
- inviting children to raise their own questions.
- encouraging children to seek their own answers.
- building children's positive self-concept by feedback which is consistently supportive.
- discipling children in a caring, direct and constructive manner.

The teacher can help the children understand their own learning process, and make it easier for them to take an active role in how they learn. Being a teacher who "always has all the answers" is not as important as being a teacher who helps children learn how to find out the answers for themselves.

## *Sharing a Sense of Humor*

What's the difference between a piano and a fish?
YOU CAN'T TUNA FISH!

How do you feel?
WITH MY HANDS!

When is a car not a car?
WHEN IT TURNS INTO A DRIVEWAY!

When is a door not a door?
WHEN IT'S AJAR!

These jokes are guaranteed howlers for the 9-12 set, and in fact the same joke on several different occasions may still "leave 'em in the aisles!" A strong sense of humor is developmentally characteristic of middle grade children. Their sense of humor goes beyond verbal jokes. As they become more attuned to the world around them they become more keenly aware of incongruous situations and they relish absurdities.

When the teacher is able to appreciate her students' sense of humor, and is able to share her own sense of humor with children, this common bond can lead to a deeper rapport. For example, when the teacher can utilize good-natured humor, she can help children learn to laugh at their own mistakes and over-reactions. It's especially reassuring for children to know that the teacher can sometimes make silly mistakes and that the teacher doesn't always take everything seriously.

A sense of humor--espcially the ability to laugh at herself--may well be the teacher's greatest single "survival" tool in the classroom. In an atmostphere of conflict or tension, a good-humored response can go a long way toward restoring balance and calm.

Obviously having a sense of humor isn't restricted to telling jokes: it's more the attitude of a response that is good-natured and light-hearted. Children don't need comedians as teachers--but sometimes they need to see that the teacher is willing to take the risk of being laughed at--especially if it means that an important message might be conveyed.

A caring teacher does not use humor as a weapon against children. Sarcasm or "humor" at the expense of children is not appropriate--this misuse of humor can hurt and alienate children. Sarcasm usually provokes anger and frustration and may make discipline problems worse. The positive use of humor--laughing "with" rather than "at"--conveys tolerance, compassion and understanding.

### *Appreciating Children's Interests*

What is the "hottest" toy?
The latest video?
The right kind of sneakers?
The most popular after-school activity?
The favorite movie star?
The newest dancestep?
The best rock group?
The latest videogame?

It usually isn't necessary for the teacher to spend time researching these questions: the children will be glad to answer them for you. Your interest in what interests them is the key. It's your ticket and tourist visa into their world.

The teacher's observations become more meaningful when the teacher is aware of what the children are interested in outside of the classroom. Some time spent watching the current favorite TV program or latest videos helps the teacher communicate to the children a receptivity to their interests, a willingness to learn "their" language. (Most children don't expect the teacher to really know where they are coming from.) For example, many children at this age enjoy scarey movies. The teacher may not share this enthusiasm. But a teacher willing to sit through one of these movies may come away with a greater appreciation of what it's like to enjoy being scared.

Whether it's films, fads or fashions, the teacher can use these interests as a springboard into discussions about the world around them. The expansion of these interests leads to a fuller understanding of how academic areas enrich their experience, and can lead to new interests.

*Did you do*
*what you said*
*you would do or*
*did you*
*do what I said*
*you should do?*
*Next time, don't—unless you do!*

***Positive in Providing Discipline***

Clear and constructive communication is at the heart of successful relationships that make it possible to develop discipline both in individuals and in the classroom. In relationships based on communication and trust, feelings, needs, and expectations can be expressed safely. A classroom is a network of many relationships based on mutual respect.

Discipline is the process of setting and consistently asserting these expectations and guidelines, and treating all children fairly. "Rules" define acceptable behavior, and present consistent boundaries for teacher and children.

Effective classroom management is the foundation for positive discipline in the classroom. Effective management enables groups to work harmoniously by providing a structure of procedures for the classroom--how children enter the room, where they sit, how they share materials, how they line up, how they go from one activity to another. It's the way things are done, the way procedures are spelled out and understood by all, consistent for all children.

It is important to spend time developing these procedures and guidelines for ways of doing things. For example, when the teacher encourages children to participate in setting guidelines and determining class rules, a strong message of confidence is communicated to children: each child is a participant in the process. Each child, therefore, has an investment in "making the system work." When children understand the guidelines, they can help maintain them. When children can be sure of the "little things," they can be safe and secure for learning.

In an interactive setting, positive discipline is expressed in all interactions--respect, courtesy, support, listening, interest in others. These values permeate the learning experience. Discipline is integrated into all activities. Children learn self-discipline, which they express when they play, when they work and interact with peers and adults. Discipline is now no longer a punitive reaction to children's behavior or the last resort for an emergency or conflict. Instead, discipline is there all along, a safe and supportive structure for learning.

There are two levels of discipline, short-term and long-term. The short-term situation may be an immediate upset in class. How the teacher responds to that situation should be determined by the long-term objective--developing and maintaining a relationship of trust and mutual respect with all students.

If there is a fight in class, the teacher may break up the fight, have a cooling off period, separate the children, send one child next door for "cooling off," and /or arrange to have a discussion later. The options the teacher selects will be based on the relationship with the children involved. Maintaining a relationship of trust is the value underlying each decision. Supporting each child without blame makes it possible for the teacher to continue to develop that long-term relationship of trust.

Teachers need to consider the best way to intervene in conflict situations. Sometimes direct intervention is necessary. But the teacher can also consider other forms of intervention: if the teacher refrains from reacting, and instead encourages children to discuss the situation, children can develop their abilities to negotiate and compromise. Although children involved in a conflict may initially want the teacher to "be on my side," the teacher maintains neutrality. This attitude helps children learn to resolve their own conflicts. Often children can reach acceptable solutions themselves because they have confidence that the teacher trusts them to do so. The teacher can guide these situations.

To seek alternatives toward the traditional kinds of discipline may seem like a difficult task. But what is necessary is opening the channels of communication, and accepting the awareness that "change" is a process.

Self-assessment can help clarify major issues that affect discipline:

- What are my attitudes toward control, order and structure?
- How can talking or movement augment learning?
- Do I discipline boys differently than girls?
- Does my preference result in favoritism?
- Do I call on one child or group more than another?
- Does my seating plan reflect this preference?
- Do students notice this preference?
- How do I feel about children with special needs or limited English proficiency? about children from different backgrounds with different values?
- Do I convey my feelings about some children to their classmates?
- Am I accepting and understanding of all children? How do I convey this understanding?

It is important to recognize that negative feedback can have a constructive and positive effect. When a child is confronted in a direct and honest way with the consequences of a wrong action, the child will recognize that the teacher is caring. If on the other hand, the teacher uses sarcasm or makes cutting remarks to the child, the teacher may unconsciously promote the resentment and hostility she seeks to punish.

Every teacher, no matter how sensitive, caring, and interactive, will have the experience of certain children who "upset the applecart" no matter what she does. This is reality. We cannot change reality, but we can change how we react to it. How do you respond to those children who upset the applecart?

The way to respond to these children is the same way the teacher responds to all children--in a fair, consistent, appropriate, and caring manner. The child who disrupts the class with extreme attention-seeking behavior is often difficult for the teacher to handle. This child often is emotionally needy. Getting beyond the level of "personalities" helps the interactive teacher know more about the child, the problem and what kind of support is most helpful for each child. Networking with other adults who interact with the child could provide additional information that might help the teacher better understand the child's problem.

When intervention in a conflict is necessary, the following strategies are helpful in defusing antagonism:

- Ask each child to clarify his or her own actions and needs without blaming.
- Listen.
- Help the children listen to each other.
- Help the children agree on what happened by retelling the situation.
- Roleplay how to resolve the situation.
- Ask: "How can we resolve this conflict?" "Are there other ways to resolve this conflict?"
- Help children see a broader perspective: Is there a funny side to the situation? Can humor be used to soften a tense situation?"

Regardless of the situation, the teacher's positive intervention can benefit all children. The fact is that classroom life always contains an element of the unpredictable. Yet no matter what is happening, each moment is the teachable moment, each moment is the moment when the teacher can make the difference.

*Networking Works! Try It!*

When the applecart is upset, is it Johnny's problem or the teacher's problem?

Neither one. It's everybody's problem--the child, the teacher, the other children, school personnel, the child's parents and other adults--because all are interconnected and interdependent.

A child who gets in trouble at school may feel that he or she is "alone in the world." The teacher can exacerbate the child's feeling of aloneness and isolation by ostracizing the child or alienating the child still further by reinforcing the idea that the child doesn't belong, or isn't important to the class.

Those children with special needs can receive the additional service and attention they require from the guidance support staff. These special needs are met by short-term intervention. Those children with deep-rooted problems may need extensive support beyond the classroom.

The teacher can make a positive difference in the child's life by initiating a support network composed of:

- the child's peers in the classroom.
- other teachers.
- supervisors.
- the school guidance counselor.
- the child's family members.
- neighbors and other community members.

The interactive teacher understands that each child has many needs beyond the classroom, and that everything that happens to children is caused by a variety of different factors.

Networking requires compromise, cooperation and understanding. The interactive teacher encourages parents to play an active role in their child's education by maintaining an open-door classroom. Receptive to opportunities to extend and develop support, the teacher turns a chance meeting with a child's mother at the corner, into a meaningful exchange.

Positive feedback goes both ways. The teacher receives support for her own efforts from others in the network. But the biggest reward for the teacher is the long term positive impact on a child that a network of caring can have. The child no longer feels isolated. The teacher is no longer alone. They are both part of a network of caring.

*Deciding to Make a Difference*

*Decide to make a difference, then network!*
*Use every conversation you have*
*every meeting*
*to express your belief in each child*
*to affirm to others each child's positive possibilities:*
*Decide to make a difference:*
*Network through thought*
*Network through action,*
*Network through commitment.*

*You are the teacher.*
*You make the difference.*

Inspired by "Decide to Network," by Robert Muller, Assistant Secretary General of the United Nations.

***Self-Awareness and Professional Growth***

How well do you know yourself? Are you doing all you can do to become the teacher you most want to be? We all have the ability to continue to grow professionally. The teacher is a "change agent," helping children grow in many ways. At the same time, being interactive means that the teacher is also changing, constantly growing as a person. Communication between the teacher and the children is a genuinely interactive process, continually evolving.

All people are constantly changing. Developing the ability to change attitudes and expectations is especially important for becoming a more interactive teacher. The teacher needs to see that continuing her own professional and personal growth is an integral part of her role in helping children move through their physical, social and emotional changes.

The way the teacher validates herself mirrors how she will validate the children in the class. The teacher who understands her own limitations has compassion for herself and for others. This attitude is conveyed to children through gentleness and understanding.

The Checklist on pages 15 and 16 is intended to give an overview of characteristics which may influence your relationships in the classroom. You may have noted an attitude or expectation you'd like to change. For example, perhaps you have a preference for a particular group. How can you change this attitude? Remembering that "feelings follow actions," you can change your attitude by changing your actions: intention can be a strong motivation for change.

How? Strategize with yourself. Develop long-term and short-term goals for yourself in the area you want to improve. Renew this commitment to yourself every day, and validate each day's improvements--just as you would with a child in your class.

Inside each of us is the potential to achieve goals for professional growth. You are the teacher who "affects eternity" because what you do today can have a lasting influence on children's potential. You make the difference.

***Activity Sheet for the Teacher***

My strongest assets are:

_____

_____

_____

_____

I would like to strengthen the following areas:

_____

_____

_____

My specific plan for meeting this goal is:

_____

_____

_____

My target date for achieving this goal is:

_____

# Section C The Interactive Setting

*I was feeding the turtle*
*near where*
*Mai Ling was watering the plants*
*near where*
*Wanda was hanging up paintings all in a row,*
*near where*
*we read about*
*careers, near*
*where we learn about*
*just about everything*
*wherever in our room we are!*

The interactive classroom is the space within four walls that a teacher brings to life. It's a very special space where children learn to discover their school, neighborhood, community and the world, through the media and experiences the teacher provides.

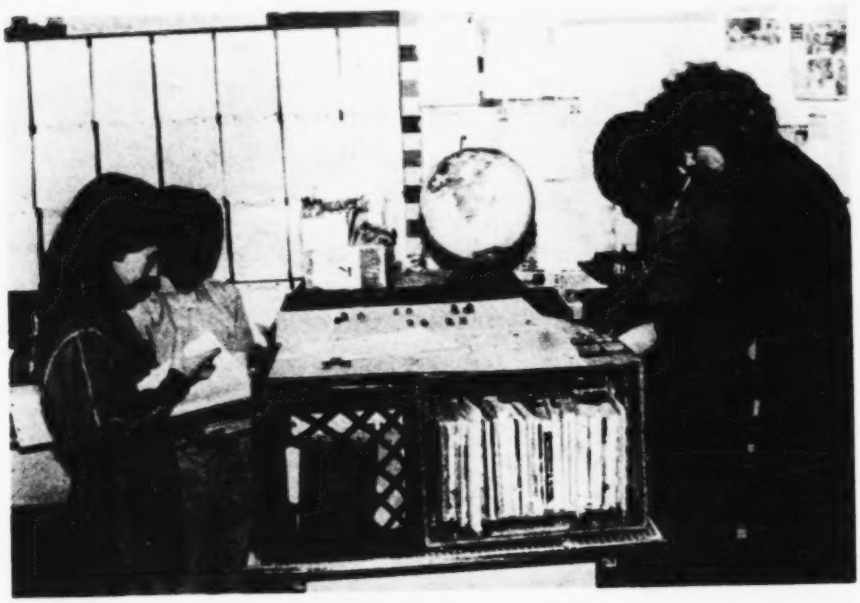
What is an interactive classroom? It is a setting:

- conducive to learning
- with a structure and organization where guidelines are agreed upon by the teacher and the students,
- taking into account the academic and social needs of students
- providing for freedom of movement when and if appropriate
- in which children can use their own ideas for arranging furniture and space to meet their needs for privacy and for group work
- with areas of interest, where children can assume responsibility and share chores.

Creating this setting does not require additional resources. In fact, limitations often inspire creative alternatives.

The teacher should maximize classroom space, using it to support and enhance the multi-faceted needs of all children. It is therefore of primary importance that that setting be interactive.

The interactive setting is the result of the creative interplay between the teacher and the children in shaping the physical space.



***Adapting the Learning Environment***

All parts of the learning environment--the learning centers, the room arrangement, the storage areas--should be designed jointly by the teacher and the students to serve the needs of all. The physical setting should be flexible enough to respond to changing needs.

Planning for effective uses of space and furniture can improve the ways children communicate and participate. For example, chairs can be moved into a circle for discussion, or arranged around a table for committee work or tutorial help. Seating can reinforce the relationship between the individual and the group, rather than focusing exclusively on the teacher-child relationship.

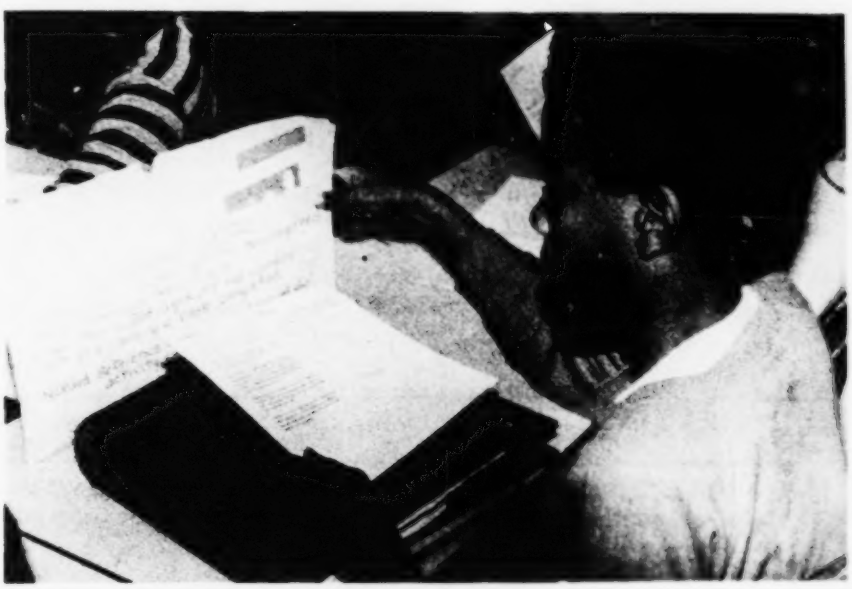
Interactive means:

*Working Together to Make It Work!*

***Resource Centers***

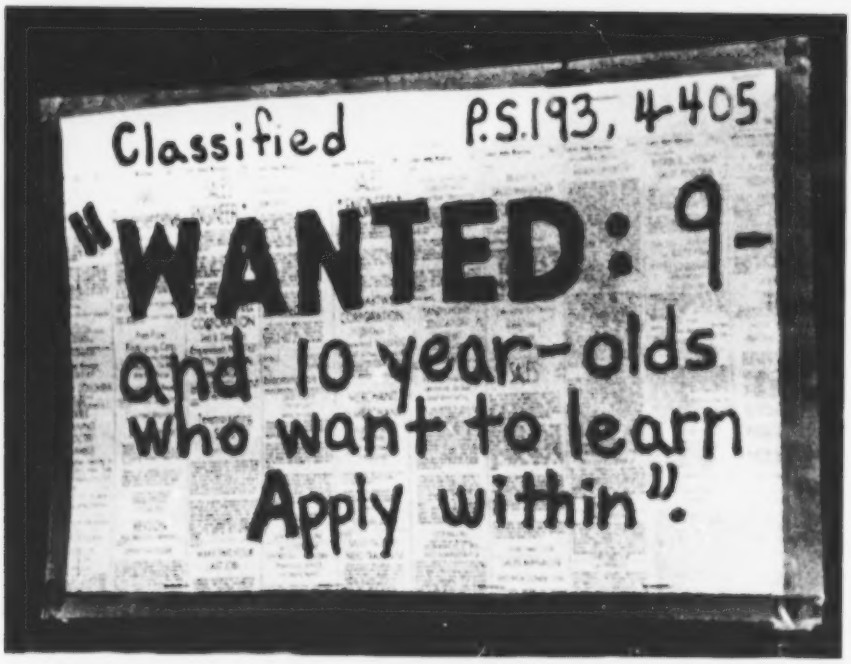
Centers of interest are based on the interests which the teacher and the children may decide upon. These centers may include:

- Science
- Hobby/Games
- Library
- Listening
- Fun
- Careers
- Computer
- Imagination
- Feelings/Values



***Classroom Management*** With so many possibilities for interaction and varied activities, the need for consistent guidelines and procedures becomes especially important. Be consistent and clear with directions, procedures and guidelines, so that this information is always accessible and is so thoroughly agreed upon that the children know how and when to use each resource center and where and how to replenish their own supplies.

Classroom management is what makes the interactive classroom a comfortable and secure environment as well as a richly challenging one.




## Section D Profiles

*Michael is the tallest in our class*
*and Maria is the tiniest*
*in between come all the rest,*
*Jorge on a skateboard*
*and Candace on toe shoes*
*Robert break dancing and*
*Mai Ling making drawings*
*of what it looks like*
*when we all get together at recess*
*jumping rope and shooting hoops*
*sharing secrets and sandwiches*
*and saying when we're grownup*
*what we're gonna do—*

Each classroom in the New York City Public Schools brings together an amazing diversity of children. If all the ten-year-olds in New York City were to meet in Grand Central Terminal, an observer would be certain that their ages ranged from six to fourteen. The physical differences in children of this age are astounding: from short to tall, blond to brunette, wiry to chunky...and every variation in between!

The internal differences are equally dramatic and pronounced. Intellectual capacity, social skills, and emotional maturity levels differ as widely as the physical differences-- one child may resemble a teenager and another a young child.

The phrase "norms of development" may seem incongruous given this wide range, however certain generalizations are helpful as a schematic overview. The following chart provides a guideline for teachers:

# Child Development

| Physical | Social | Intellectual |
|---|---|---|
| **Eight Years Old** | | |
| Growth is slow and steady; permanent teeth replace "baby" teeth. | Prefers to work and play with others; identifies with group; accepts rules; likes to compete. | Establishes own methods of employing skills in language and math. |
| Eyes are ready for near and far vision (near-sightedness develops this year). | More selective in choice of friends; follows peers in activities, ideas. | Understanding of space and time may develop. |
| Interested in games requiring coordination. | Primary loyalty to peer group rather than adults. | Can define problems and solutions; capable of critical judgment; weighs, appraises, and utilizes facts |
| Ability to write progresses. | Alert, friendly, and interested in people.<br>Eager and enthusiastic to express ideas and take part; shows self-confidence.<br>Has awareness of self and others.<br>Strong social rather than academic orientation. | Distinguishes fact from fiction.<br>Accepts criticism.<br>Shows curiosity and interest in the world. |
| **Nine Years Old** | | |
| Slow, steady growth continues; girls forge ahead; Some children reach plateau preceding adolescent growth spurt. | Group and club enthusiasm; hostility toward other groups; clubs and exclusion from clubs are both short-lived. | Has begun independent, critical thinking. |
| Increased skill in use of fine muscles; needs activities to continue to develop large muscles; uses tools well, as is evident in details of finished products. | Becoming aware of responsibility to others; exhibits increased ability to evaluate self and others. Argues over fairness in games.<br>Interested in penalites and privileges in school and club life. | Wants to perfect skills, repeats tasks.<br>Wants to know what things are made of and how they work; enjoys collecting, identifying, and classifying things. |

| Physical | Social | Intellectual |
|---|---|---|
| Lungs, digestive, and circulatory systems are almost mature; heart is subject to strain. Teeth may need straightening; first and second bicuspids appear. | Improved concentration; answers to self as well as others. | Interested in science, the arts, literature, and sports, may specialize in one area. |
| Eyes almost adult size, can adjust for near and far vision; eye-hand coordination is good. | More independent when away from family; aware of differences in standards between family and friends. | Likes to plan ahead. |
| Enjoys motor coordination as skills increase; works and plays at peak capacity. | Decisive, responsible, dependable, reasonable, with a strong sense of right and wrong; likes to talk; critical of adults; inner control of behavior. | Interested in all media—comedy, news, drama; less interested in fantasy. |
| **Ten Years Old** | | |
| Girls are more mature physically than boys. | Easygoing; seldom cries; anger may be disruptive. | Establishes own way of using skills. |
| Awkwardness and restlessness due to growth spurts. | Good sense of humor; enjoys jokes and puns. | Broader understanding of space and time; able to discuss problems, see different sides of questions. More objectivity in judgments. |
| Secondary sex characteristics begin to develop. | Has a fine sense of justice and fair play. | Interested in other people's ideas. |
| Approximately half the permanent teeth are developed. | Open to ideas of social justice and welfare. | Insights may be more mature. |
| | Capable of strong loyalties and hero worship. | May have greater capacity to accept criticism and to evaluate self. |
| | May accept without question anything heard on radio or seen on television. | |
| | Conflict between a desire for belonging and the urge for competition; learning from peers; eager for group approval and belonging. | |
| | More accepting of self and others. | |

| Physical | Social | Intellectual |
|---|---|---|
| **Ten to Twelve Years Old** | | |
| Concrete activities help prepare for abstract concepts. | | Transition from concrete to abstract thinking; confidence in self as learner needs instructional support for mastering abstract thinking:<br>• individual attention<br>• ample concrete experiences and examples<br>• instruction on the process by which a generalization is reached<br>• clarification of abstract language |
| Wide variations in physical maturity: girls 2 years ahead of boys, tend to reach physiological maturity earlier and are larger and stronger than boys the same age. | Team spirit is strong; may enjoy vigorous games; is restless and eager for activity. | |
| Awkwardness in movement due to rapid muscular and skeletal growth. | Quarrels and makes up readily; angers easily, may desire aloneness or experience shyness; may have fears but won't admit it. | |
| May tire easily due to marked physical changes. | Admires those who are skillful; critical of adults yet acts well with them. | |
| | Feelings and insecurities intensify. Some children become touchy and unpredictable. A new self-definition may be expressed through confrontation with adults. Eleven-year-old often say, "Everything I do is wrong," or, "You're always picking on me—leave me alone!" | |

## *"Getting to Know You" Checklist*

Inside every child there is a winner. The teacher who believes in the worth of each child can help bring forth that winner. It is that attitude of positive expectation, the belief that all children can learn, that can do it. The teacher's attitude of determination can be positively contagious--and vital to the teacher's own feeling of being a winner in the classroom.

How can the interactive teacher support this positive assumption in each interaction with each child? A successful relationship begins with a positive attitude. To make it happen for each child, the teacher has to know each child. Watching the child at work and at play is important in planning for the needs of each child.

The following checklist is designed to help a teacher focus on a child's behavior so that the teacher can better plan for the social, emotional and educational needs of her students.

Sometimes a simple checklist can help formalize important information for each child as well as identify those children who need special attention. Following the Checklist, the Interest Inventory may be duplicated and distributed to all students as a "Getting to Know You" activity which will provide vital information for you!

## *"Getting to Know You" Checklist*

How do I support children: Intellectually_____

Socially _____

Emotionally _____

What abilities or potential do I observe in this child?_____

_____

How can I encourage this child's potential?_____

_____

What risks does this child take? How can I encourage the child to take risks?

_____

In what areas does this child need additional support? How do I support the child in these areas?_____

_____

Based on the "Interest Inventory," how does the child participate in the following:

Joins clubs _____ teams _____ activities _____

Participates in group projects_____

Involved in close friendships_____

Initiates fantasy activities_____

After analyzing the "Interest Inventory," how can I acknowledge and communicate my response to this child?_____

_____

What additional ways can I explore to further support and acknowlege the successes of this child? _____

_____

What further ways can I explore to help this child strengthen areas in which additional support is needed? _____

_____

## *Interest Inventory*

1. LIST AS MANY THINGS AS YOU CAN THAT YOU REALLY LIKE TO DO IN YOUR FREE TIME. (ride a bike, skateboard, jump rope, play a musical instrument, read, dance, draw, sew, play sports, or anything else you enjoy.)

_____ _____ _____

_____ _____ _____

2. ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS: What things do you like to do with your friends?

_____

What new things would you like to do with your friends this year?

_____

What clubs, sports teams, music groups, or church groups do you belong to?

_____ _____ _____

What jobs have you done out of school? (Such as: babysit, run errands, paper route, neighborhood clean-up, help in street fair.)

_____ _____ _____

What jobs have you done in school? (helping other students, hall monitor, or other job)

_____ _____ _____

What jobs would you like to do in school this year? _____

What new skills would you like to learn this year in or out of school?

_____

3. COMPLETE THESE SENTENCES:

WHEN I GROW UP, I WOULD LIKE TO BE _____

_____

SOMETHING I WOULD LIKE MY TEACHER TO KNOW ABOUT ME IS _____

_____

MY FAVORITE SUBJECT IS _____

The following four profiles represent observations of children as recorded by their teacher.

# Robert

***Observations***

Robert is a 10-year-old 4th grader. He likes his class, teacher and classmates but often gets in trouble because of his lack of self-control. He is easily distracted and distracts others by interrupting whenever he has something to say.

He brings gadgets into school and plays with them during class time--he prefers this to work. He knows alot about electronic toys, rock videos and videogames. He's a natural with a camera and takes fabulous snapshots.

He loves music and breakdancing.

He usually doesn't follow class rules and makes the excuse: "I know, I forgot; I didn't mean it." Sometimes he walks around the room when he gets bored.

Very often he tries to act "cool," but if he's not in the top pick in sports, he loses his cool and pouts. "I didn't want to play anyhow."

His peers like him because he's easy to talk to; however, he doesn't have a real buddy in the class, one child that he really relates to.

A review of his academic record shows that he ranks in the lower third in both reading and math. He does well in math computation, but his problem in reading hinders his ability to solve math problems. He says, "Do we have to do this again?" "Can't we do decimals instead?"

He dislikes writing even though his verbal ability is well above average.

He has high energy and good spirits--a winning combination!

*Awareness*

Robert is at a crucial point in his development. Can I make the difference? If I can capitalize on Robert's strength and believes in his potential, Robert can be a winner!

Academic strength is verbal ability.
Weakness in reading affects other academic areas.

It is important that Robert see the progress he makes and sets new and achievable goals for himself, for his relationship with others.

*Strategies*

I can have Robert work with an assigned buddy to produce a short picture study in photography under the supervision of the teacher. Support Robert and his buddy's decision on story, write script, select appropriate shots and complete project. I can give Robert the opportunity to share this project with class and other classes throughout the school.

I can capitalize on Robert's verbal skills, by having him retell or summarize stories. Have him read stories to younger class. His verbal ability can help motivate him to write.

Supply more "To Do" activities in a folder so that he will have something to do when he feels bored or distracted.

Develop contract with Robert to improve his behavior and work habits. Mutually decide on goals, point system of incentives and rewards. Have Robert sign it and send a copy home. Help him decide short term goal, such as not calling out in class, not getting out of seat, not playing with gagdets.

Then have him keep a daily record of each time he called out, etc. Meet briefly with Robert to discuss progress and reward with incentives as agreed.

Praise him when he shows improvement; acknowledge him when he volunteers to talk or answer questions. Give him recognition before he is likely to interrupt others.

Have him check his toys and gadgets until playtime, lunch. Encourage him to share his interests during free time.

Discuss good sportsmanship with Robert's group:
- No one can win all the time.
- What makes a winning team?
- How do people choose teammates?
- Share feelings about playing on teams, working with others.

Robert and I agree on choice of a peer tutor who is good in math problem-solving.

Help Robert see that improving his reading will help him become a better math student: When he can read the problem, he can solve it, using his good computation skills.

Provide ongoing and specific feedback on his work and progress to reinforce his strengths and to assist him in setting new goals.

Conference with Robert's parents to discuss Robert's plan, contract and progress. Involve them in process by asking them to check his homework and to establish ongoing commitment between school and parents to support Robert. I will send commendations to parents as positive reinforcements for Robert.

If I typecast him as disruptive, Robert could easily continue in this mode, really becoming a "behavior problem." If I plan for his individual needs, the strategies presented here can help Robert become a winner!

# Michael

*Observations*

Michael is an 11-year-old 6th grader who is in a Special Education class. He is being considered for decertification when he enters junior high school next fall. In preparation for this transition, he is presently being mainstreamed to a regular 6th grade class in Social Studies for one period a day. As his mainstream teacher, I want to help Michael enjoy this new challenge--and succeed!

Michael has cerebral palsy. He is husky for his age, which makes him appear older. His physical disability is shown in a limp and a speech impairment. Michael is shy and doesn't have many friends. He is not a leader and doesn't socialize easily.

When offered help, he gets angry and says "don't help me." He responds the same way to his peers whenever they offer any assistance.

In spite of this he likes to volunteer and wants to get involved.

He enjoys using a taperecorder: has a walkman and listens to tapes frequently.

His reading is two years above grade level.

Michael can do it--and I can help him learn how'

*Awareness*

Michael needs to be able to help others in order to accept help for himself.

What can I do to build Michael's self-confidence and help improve his interpersonal skills?

How can I capitalize on his academic strengths?

How can I help Michael become a member of the group?

How can I plan to have Michael participate on class trips in Social Studies for socialization?

How can I arrange for Michael to be included for lunch with class once a week? The experience of being part of the group in a social setting will increase his self-confidence.

***Strategies*** I think the following strategies, used separately or in combination, will help Michael find his place in our group:

- Help him select a buddy.
- Encourage him to work on listening to others during all his classes. Help him see connection between learning and listening to others.
- Use a contract to help Michael improve listening skills.
- Reinforce improvement by sending him back to his homeroom class with positive note, that he: - worked well
  - helped others by listening and responding
- Have Michael participate on a social studies committee, so that he can experience decision-making and being part of a group.
- Ask Michael to tape interviews for social studies project.
- Begin to form support network with his special education teacher. Conference to find out more about him, and plan jointly with the special education teacher.
- Extend network to guidance counselor for added support.

Each day as Michael experiences that he does have a positive contribution to make--and that his contribution is appreciated--he will grow in self-esteem and self confidence. And I can help make sure that happens!

# Mai Ling

***Observations***

Mai Ling is a 9-year-old 4th grader. She is shy and unassertive, newly arrived from Cambodia. She does not volunteer for fear of being wrong. She does not like mathematics, is fair in computation but poor in problem-solving. Even though Mai Ling does not excel in math, she has an uncanny ability to solve puzzles and mazes. Mai Ling really wants to be "American" --this is her incentive for learning the language.

Mai Ling is good in drawing. She enjoys drawing cartoons but can't verbalize what they depict.

During free time Mai Ling gravitates toward the game center where she usually wins at checkers, chess and other strategy games.

She enjoys participating in team sports but does not stay for the after-school programs. She is very shy and appears self-consious. She very rarely speaks unless spoken to first. Boys seem to like her and sometimes tease her. She does not know how to respond to the boys and usually avoids them. She only plays with girls.

She is well-behaved but seems preoccupied. She often daydreams in class. Sometimes when I look at Mai Ling, I think of how my mother must have felt when she first came to school in this country as a little girl, and couldn't speak a word of English.

***Awareness***

This child could easily be overlooked because she is quiet and well-behaved.

Mai Ling tries hard and keeps busy, which hides her academic problems.

There seems to be much more under the surface. I am concerned about who she really is--what is she like at home and when she attended school in Cambodia?

I would like to address her need to belong--which we all have--and her need to relate to a close friend.

I think family conferencing is especially important here, because of strong family support system.

***Strategies*** I will set up parent conference with Cambodian-speaking representative from the Community Based Organization to:

- learn more about Mai Ling, why she rushes home after school.
- use agency as laison for better communication with parents to talk about goals for Mai Ling.
- inform parents of tutorial, recreational programs after school and see if mother will allow Mai Ling to stay one day after school.
- help parents learn to use community resources and support.

Enroll Mai Ling in an E.S.L. program.

Assign her a buddy who will help her with English and help her make the adjustment to American culture more easily. Direct buddy to help Mai Ling.

Encourage Mai Ling to ask for help from buddy, other peers, and teacher.

Have her share cartoons with buddy and with others in reading group.

Encourage Mai Ling to use her artistic skills in class or on the school newspaper.

Encourage her to participate in after school activities and coed sports.

My immediate priority is to be sensitive to Mai Ling's feelings of newness, her cultural conflicts, her fear of rejection and her need to be accepted. These strategies help Mai Ling begin to feel accepted in the classroom.

# Wanda

***Observations***

Wanda is an 11 year old 5th grader who seems to enjoy who she is and what she's doing. She is aware of her good looks and is always very well dressed. Wanda was new to the school last year. She lives with her mother who leaves for work very early and doesn't get home until 6:30. Wanda does not seem to lack for mother's love nor for material things.

She seems mature for her age and is very interested in boys. Her peers seem to like and admire her confidence. Wanda tries very hard to have everyone like her. But I notice that Wanda is sometimes moody.

She performs on grade level in reading and math; but I notice she does minimal work, rarely does her homework.

She loves to write poetry but is embarrassed to share it. Her vocabulary is extensive and she uses it well when she wants to. Does she hide her talents, thinking she will be more accepted by peers if she doesn't excel?

She has told me that she is "afraid" to be alone and often is "lonely."

She usually hangs out with her friends or goes over to a friend's house after school until 5:30 P.M. so that she arrives home just before her mother.

***Awareness***

Wanda needs more nurturing, more attention--she's very lonely!

I am aware that Wanda has too much free time; is too often unsupervised, lonely, moody and afraid.

She is a bright and talented child, who is performing minimally.

Wanda needs to have more structure for her leisure time--to be involved with constructive and structured after-school activities.

How can I support her in increasing self-esteem--so that she will be able to use her abilities more positively?

***Strategies***

Network with mother and involve mother in plan. Have mother agree to check up on homework and take an active role in Wanda's schoolwork and activities. Mention that Wanda has discussed fears about being alone, and feelings of loneliness. Check with mother whether or not a neighbor is available in case of emergency.

Encourage mother to enroll Wanda in an after-school center or local community-based Organization, Girls Club or Sports team.

Involve Wanda in a peer-tutoring program after school to tutor or mentor. Being a helping and giving person will help her develop responsibility.

Involve the guidance counselor to provide additional support.

Involve Wanda in rap group, roleplaying to discuss changing feelings, problem situations, attitudes toward friends, etc.

Provide experiences working on committees, where it is necessary to talk out problems, resolve issues verbally, and develop effective communication skills.

Have Wanda share unfinished story or sentence completions in reading group.

Have her keep a journal and encourage her to (voluntarily) share some of the entries with her reading group.

Encourage her to submit poetry to the class or school newspaper.

As Wanda begins to experience more structure in her day and more direct support from her mother, she will feel more confident.

# Section E: Resources

## *The Guidance Counselor*

The teacher's most immediate resource is to network with the school's guidance counselor. This trained professional can help support your guidance objectives and be an invaluable part of your support network by providing the following services:

- Consulting with the teacher to develop plans and strategies to support students.
- Discussing individual student's needs.
- Helping analyze individual and group needs and situations;
- Offering insight into conflict situations;
- Making suggestions in handling discipline and other problems: cooling off activities, space in school for cooling off (The Friendly or Helping Room)
- Recommending classroom activities and materials (films, books, speakers) to develop self-concept, foster interpersonal skills and career awareness
- Conducting affective activities in the classroom (feelings, peer pressure, getting along)
- Meeting with students individually and in small groups
- Meeting with parents during conferences
- Conducting workshops for students, parents, teachers, staff on current problems or situations affecting school community (such as drug abuse)
- Giving support to students experiencing trauma (divorce, death, family crisis)
- Being available to teachers, students, parents for one-on-one conference, support and referral when appropriate.

When the teacher works and networks with the guidance counselor, problems that may surface early in a child's life can receive preventive attention. Students exhibiting signs of special need can often be helped effectively if these signs are heeded promptly.

## *Sample Lessons*

The two lessons which follow are intended as prototypes or patterns for any lessons or activities teachers may develop. Because the issues expressed in the Guidance Strands are interwoven throughout daily activities, the teacher can freely choose activities based on students' interests, and then simply focus on the process of interaction and discussion in doing the activity, rather than on the result or end product.

SAMPLE LESSONS

LESSON 1: "ME" MONTAGE (Strand 1)

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NOTE: Strand 1 focuses on the following:

- . who am I -- the real "me"
- . empathy and sympathy
- . strengths and weakneses
- . belonging
- . sexual awareness
- . personal responsibility and learning to say no

Select one or more of these themes for the basis of an activity. Be sure to:

. provide an abundance of attractive and varied materials so that children will be inspired to express themselves.

. time the "hands-on" activity carefully so that children can complete the activity and allow time for feedback. Record responses on large sheets of newsprint. Save them as a reference point for future discussions, etc.

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AIM: To construct a collage reflecting children's inner and outer images of themselves.

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES Students will be able to:

. express their ethnic and environmental heritage in collage form.
. create images depicting their interests, experiences and their relationships with their families and peers.

MATERIALS: Prior to the activity gather the following:

- old photos
- magazines and pictures families in New York City
- newspapers
- travel photos
- 11 X 14 or larger newsprint
- colored paper
- crayons, magic markers
- large-print letters or words cut from print materials

ACTIVITY:

Have children construct a "Me Montage." Suggest that they choose pictures and other materials to express what is special about them. Have them start by writing their names in the middle of the paper, in whatever way they like. They can then add materials and use written words as needed.

FOLLOW UP:

Using large newsprint or chalkboard, have a student record responses, as students discuss the themes in their pictures: size of self, colors used, family groupings. Ask: What did you find out about yourself? About other students? Do you have images in common with other students?

Lesson 2: SHARING OUR STORIES (Strand 2)

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NOTE: Strand 2 focuses on the following themes:

- undertanding and respecting cultural/ethnic/religious/ sexual differences
- Working effectively with others
- Developing community involvement
- Developing concept of service

One or more themes may be the basis of an interactive experience. If possible, arrange for students to visit a community center, such as a senior citizens program, day care program, or health facility; or invite a speaker from such a group to speak with children.

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AIM: To develop and strengthen interpersonal relationships

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES Students will be able to:

- collect information on the similarities and differences between themselves and others by conducting interviews.
- appreciate cultural, ethnic, religious, age and sexual differences.
- make a graph or other visual representation of their findings.

MATERIALS:

- tape recorder and tapes - time-line materials - family tree designs

DEVELOPMENT:

- Prepare children for a visit to a day care center, senior citizen facility, or other community service organization by having students divide up into working committees of five members. Have each committee develop a list of questions for interviews, to find out what they might have in common with the people they will be meeting, such as:
  - How did you like to spend your spare time when you were our age?
  - What is/was the best time you had with your family?
- Students can prepare to tape interviews by learning how to use tape recorder. Have groups of students interview each other on tape.

FOLLOW UP:

- Have children discuss those persons interviewed/visited who seemed most like themselves and/or their family. Ask: Who seemed most different? What did you have in common with them?
- Have each children write a letter to someone at the site sharing something they ahve in common.
- Have children interview a parent, relative, or caretaker about their family. Then have them arrange the information into a family tree.

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# Afterword

Children in one classroom come from many backgrounds and have a wide range of abilities, talents, skills and needs. An important part of the teacher's role is to be aware of the social dynamics in the classroom. She should know which children belong to the "in" group, and help the children who need support to deal with and counteract any feelings of rejection because of exclusions from the groups. Children and adults alike want to belong to a group; however, it is important that the children begin to understand that group conformity can mean compromise with personal values and individuality. This can signal conflict in some children and needs to be watched by the teacher for intervention when necessary.

Teachers can help children become part of a group, but children should understand that it is okay to sometimes go against the group when the group decides to do something that the individual does not feel is right for him or her.

The teacher knows that what a child believes about him or herself affects what he or she can accomplish. Expectation can become self-fulfilling prophecy. The interactive teacher sees the winner each child can become--and believes in that winner. Observations are keyed to that assumption, and strategies are devised to help that winner emerge.

When the teacher encourages children to develop their individuality as people as well as group members, children can learn to feel comfortable inside or outside of the group.

No two children are alike, nor are any two teachers. The strategies and suggestions presented here can have maximum impact when adapted freely by teachers to meet the varied needs of children in New York City schools.

We hope that practicing the interactive process described in this manual will enable each teacher to become more aware of the opportunities each day offers to make a positive difference in the lives of many--the children, their families, and the communities in which they live.

EVALUATION FORM

GUIDANCE EVERY DAY: A HELPING MANUAL FOR TEACHERS OF GRADES 4-6

Division of Curriculum and Instruction
Office of Curriculum Development and Support

Please return to: Priscilla Chavez-Reilly, Director
Guidance Services, New York City Board of Education
362 Schemerhorn Street, Brooklyn, New York 11201

Your participation is important in planning for the revision of this experimental edition of GUIDANCE EVERY DAY: A HELPING MANUAL FOR TEACHERS OF GRADES 4-6. Please share your comments and suggestions with us.

Name: _____ School: _____

Title or Position: _____

1. How is this Manual helpful to you in your classroom? _____

_____

2. Which sections of this Manual are most helpful on a day-to-day basis?

_____

3. What additional materials could be included to make the book more useful?

_____

4. How has this book helped clarify ways to infuse guidance principles into your teaching? _____

5. How does this book realistically address the issues that concern you on a day-to-day basis? _____

_____

6. What other issues should be discussed to improve this book? _____

_____

7. List any other suggestions you have for making this book more effective.

_____

_____

8. What additional ways have you utilized this book as a resource (for parent workshops, etc.)? _____

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